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MCLEAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

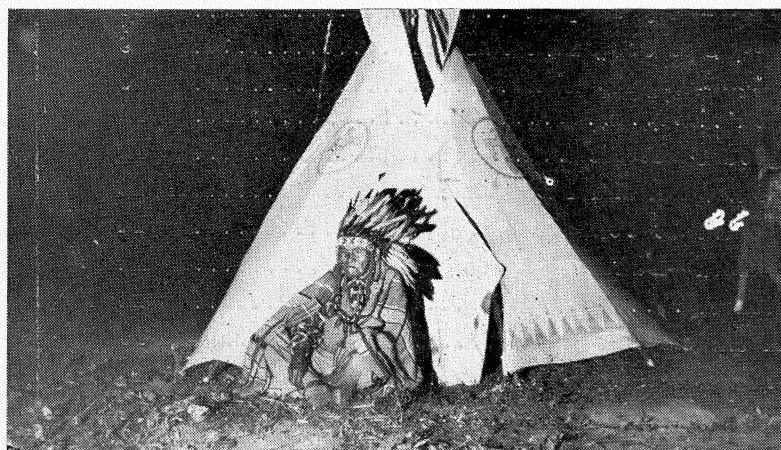


# Journal of the Illinois State Archaeological Society

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No. 1



Jim Poweshiek, Sauk and Fox Indian,  
Attending the Sauk and Fox Dances, Black  
Hawk State Park, Rock Island, Ill.

## LET US PLAN TO ATTEND:

The annual Sauk and Fox Ceremonial Dances, Labor Day Weekend, September 4-6, 1948, Black Hawk State Park, Rock Island, Ill.

The Sauk and Fox Indian Fiesta is one of the unique and picturesque Ceremonials east of the Father of Waters.

For additional pictures and announcements of these Dances, see pages 12-13.



The weird, yet enchanting music of the American Indians accompanies all of the dances of the Sauk and Fox Fiesta, Black Hawk State Park, Rock Island, Ill. The drum is the chief musical instrument. The drummers are expert in their picturesque role. Edward Mack, without hat, extreme left, is husband of Mrs. Mary Mack, great-great-granddaughter of Chief Black Hawk. The Macks have attended the Fiesta for many years.

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## FAIRBURY ARCHAEOLOGISTS MAKE NOTABLE DISCOVERIES IN LOCAL MOUNDS

By Stanley Lantz, Bloomington, Ill.  
Pantagraph Staff Writer

The Fairbury Amateur Archaeological Society, a five-year-old organization of students especially interested in the lore of Indians who lived in the Fairbury area, scored a scoop May 23, 1948, that may make professional Archaeologists drool when they hear about it.

The club uncovered a well preserved skeleton belonging to a Prehistoric Mound-Builder who was buried on the spot hundreds of years ago.

The event, which seems merely interesting to the uninitiated, will be the subject of much writing, photographing and discussion in Archaeological circles.

The facts surrounding the discovery started about fifty years ago. A man called "Maje" Smith started to build a house about six miles north of Fairbury.

### Finds Burial Mound.

In digging for a cellar, Smith uncovered a few artifacts (arrowheads, etc.) and some human bones. A sensitive man, he realized that he was uncovering part of a burial mound and ordered the excavation stopped. He did, however, go ahead and build his house on the Mound.

In February, 1948, the house (then owned by P. C. James) burned. James made an agreement with the Fairbury group whereby they would dig the holes and ditch for septic tanks and sewer line in exchange for anything of interest they might find buried.

It was a good proposition for the Archaeology enthusiasts. They had had the site spotted for a long, long time. It is situated at the junction of Indian Creek and the south branch of the Vermilion River. Such a junction, according to Archaeologists, is an ideal setup for finding an old Indian village site or burial mound.

### Prospects Foretold.

As a matter of fact, a field trip three years ago by members of the Illinois State Archaeological Society with a Geologist from the University of Illinois had already determined a five-foot Mound that fairly cried out for investigation.

Many artifacts had already been found near the site. They all told the experts that Indians of either the Woodland or Middle Mississippi cultures, both prehistoric, had flourished in the area. This discovery proved the Woodland theory, pointing to past occupancy by generations of men who lived in the neighborhood some time between 500 A. D. and 1500 A. D.

The group started trenching north of the

Mound to determine the floor level of the forgotten village. It was found to be just about a foot below the present ground leading to the Mound.

### Skull Discovered.

Marion Knott suddenly found his spade in contact with what appeared to be a human skull. Working as quickly as they could with whisk brooms and hand tools, the group finally uncovered the complete skeleton.

To an Archaeologist who has seen a Mound-Builder's skeleton lying in its original burial position, it takes but a few minutes to unravel every mystery about the deceased except his name.

This particular ancient, for instance, was five feet and six inches tall, a hunter who belonged to the Woodland culture and who died as a result of someone bashing him over the right ear with a sharp-edged stone weapon.

Edgar Zook, Member of the Illinois State Archaeological Society and Illinois State Historical Society, was present to assist in the project. He cites the following facts as proof that the group had hit a Woodland village burial place.

### Further Evidence.

The skeleton, found five feet below the ground level, was covered with clam shells, stones and charcoal from old camp fires. It was buried in the flexed position, knees drawn up to the chest, and it faced southwest. There was a typical scarcity of grave goods. The burial yielded one leaf-shaped flint arrowhead and a broken drill over the right forearm. Under the torso was buried a five-inch, split-bone awl made from the sharpened and polished ulna bone of a deer. All of these, says Zook, were customary practices of the Mound-Builders of the Woodland culture.

According to Zook, this is the only burial Mound known in the vicinity. The local organization, however, is continually searching for new holes to dig.

The expedition included Marion Knott, Willis Harris, Clinton Harris, Don Merrill and Guy Slater, all of Fairbury, and Edward Antanitus, of Oglesby, Ill. Ben Nussbaum had visitors from Ohio and was unable to be present for the excavation.

During the excavation process, three cord-imprinted potsherds, typical of Woodland culture, were found. Tempering material was crushed stone, and the sherd walls had a thickness of half an inch. Also discovered was the caudal fin of a fish, a broken split-bone awl, one small arrowhead, three broken arrowheads, two rejects, a quartzite hammerstone, a large flake, seven whole

(Continued on Page 25)





Ben Nussbaum, affectionately referred to by fellow archaeologists as "Bannerstone Ben."  
Cut, Courtesy, Bloomington, Ill., Pantagraph

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clam shells, and 17 broken clam shells. The artifacts were crudely flaked.

The skeletal material has been cleaned, and treated with a preservative. Plans are being made to return the skeleton to the burial Mound, where it will be placed on permanent display.

Before digging in the Mound, the Fairbury group started trenching in what may prove to be a Middle Mississippi village site, 200 yards east of the burial site along the north bank of the Vermilion River. An important find made by Edgar Zook eight inches below the surface was an unnotched flint spade five inches long. Other artifacts unearthed were arrowheads, broken arrowheads, scrapers, broken drills, and broken pieces of axes or celts. Research work will be continued at the site throughout the summer.

Raymond F. Long, Pearl, Ill., sends in a new Membership for Carl Schuetz, Shipman, Ill.

"Kindly begin his subscription with the superb April Journal. I shall be glad to continue the good work of sending in new Members. This is my fourth (to April 26) which I have sent since being appointed Chairman of the Pike County, Ill., Membership Committee." — Raymond F. Long, Pearl, Ill.

James F. Renefick, 19 Leander St., Danielson, Conn., is a new Member of our Illinois Society, thanks to B. W. Stephens and Dr. Don Dickson.

"I have a large Collection of American Indian artifacts. I was recently in Fulton County, Ill., digging with "Steve." Dr. Dickson said, besides my regular Membership, I should have the last two or three Illinois Journals, and I have sent Treasurer Nussbaum a check for three back issues."—James F. Renefick, Danielson, Conn.